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ABSTRACT

When student and novice teachers see themselves as learners or researchers and spend some of their energy trying to understand their students and their students' perspectives, they become less attached to pedagogical techniques and move quickly to a responsive and reflective way of teaching that is more commonly associated with experienced teachers. In this study, student teachers were taught naturalistic inquiry skills. The university supervisor, student teachers, and novice teachers (who had received instruction in naturalistic inquiry) kept field notes and observed and interviewed each other, cooperating teachers, administrators, and the student teachers' high school students. Weekly meetings with student teachers and less frequent meetings and correspondence with novice teachers were held. The conclusions drawn in this exploration of the process and outcomes of preservice and inservice teachers becoming naturalistic teacher-researchers are related to the work of the postmodernist philosopher Emmanuel Levinas. Findings from this study indicate that student and novice teachers can develop naturalistic inquiry skills while learning to teach and that involving teachers at various stages of professional development in inquiry helps them to understand their students better and to model the learning process for their students; it makes them willing to change in response to the needs of others and involves them in the research community in ways that benefit teaching and teacher education. (IAH)

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Preparing Teachers as Naturalistic Inquirers: Responding to the face of the other

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"For we know in part . . . But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. . . . For now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known." I Corinthians 13:9-10, 12 (King James Version of the Bible)

Introduction and Literature

For the last three years, I have been exploring an approach for helping young people become teachers that invites them to become involved in a particular learning process and to think of themselves as inquirers and as teachers. Connecting literatures on teacher preparation, novice teachers, and teachers as researchers, I wondered if student teachers and novice teachers might benefit by learning to do qualitative research while learning to teach. It seemed to make sense that if they learned to learn this way early in their careers and had some success doing research while learning to teach, student teachers and novice teachers might be more inclined to continue to be learners throughout their teaching careers. This approach might even alleviate some of the problems of burnout and thoughtless teaching that plague many teachers.

The literature on teacher preparation concludes that one of the most important parts of that educational process is the student teaching or field experience. However, the pedagogical practices of student teaching continue to be criticized as being less helpful than they could be (Lanier & Little, 1986). Guyton and McIntyre (1990, pg. 518) confirm this literature in an extensive review and call for research on critical questions about the field experience such as the following: "What strategies can be implemented to encourage student teachers to be students of teaching and reflective about their behavior and surroundings?" They urge the use of naturalistic inquiry to study the student teaching experience from the perspectives of the participants.

The literature on novice teachers likewise concludes that the first few years of teaching constitute one of the most crucial stages in the development of teachers (Bion, 1991). During this time, teachers are more vulnerable (Hoffman, et. al., 1986), unsure of their competence (Johnston & Ryan, 1980), and introspective (Pajak & Blase, 1982) than they are likely to be in later years of their professional lives. The questions raised by Guyton and McIntyre seem appropriate for this stage in teacher development as well.

Authors of a third body of literature have encouraged teachers to be more thoughtful and reflective about their work by conducting qualitative research as a natural extension of the inquiries they make already in their classrooms and with their students (e.g., Fosnot, 1989; Goswami & Stillman, 1987; and Hitchcock and Hughes, 1989). Goswami and Stillman (preface) note that several exciting results accrue when teachers "conduct research as a regular part of their roles as teachers." For example, they find that teacher-researchers:

1. become theorists regarding their own practice, testing their assumptions against their practices;
2. perceive themselves differently, forming networks and becoming more active professionally;
3. provide invaluable insights into the learning process to the profession and to other researchers because of their insider perspectives; and
4. critically read and use current research from others, being less vulnerable to fads.

These literatures call for the use of research by the participants to enhance the learning experiences of student teachers, novice teachers, and teachers in general. Qualitative research was suggested by some as the most natural for practicing educators to learn and practice. It seemed to me that both preservice and inservice teachers could learn to build on their existing learning and monitoring skills to become insightful naturalistic teacher-researchers.

This presentation will briefly summarize one key lesson I learned during an exploration of these ideas and relate this experience to the work of the post-modernist philosopher, Emmanuel Levinas. Briefly stated, the lesson is: When teachers see themselves as learners or researchers and spend some of their energy trying to understand their students and their perspectives, they become less attached to pedagogical techniques and move quickly to a responsive and reflective way of teaching that is more commonly associated with experienced teachers. Because they know their students better, they tailor learning experiences for them that are more appropriate than generic curriculum could be.

Methods

Procedures

This study grew out of a naturalistic study I have been conducting in a moderately large high school since January 1989. As a university supervisor, I have involved several groups of student teachers during their preservice courses and field experience and have continued working with them as they have taken teaching positions. They agreed to keep fieldnotes to share with me and with each other during the study. As part of the study, I have taught them naturalistic inquiry skills while their cooperating teachers taught them how to teach. All our work has been in the field; no courses were taught on the university campus.

The procedures we used were typical of naturalistic or ethnographic studies with ongoing interpretive analysis. We observed and interviewed each other, the student teachers' cooperating teachers and administrators and their high school students. We also analyzed documents produced by the teachers and students, such as curriculum files and student work.

Analyses of our fieldnotes were conducted both individually and jointly by me and the others throughout the course of the study. Fieldnotes containing observations, interview transcripts, document analyses, audit trail indices, interim analyses, and reflections of the researchers were maintained and shared in weekly meetings with the student teachers throughout the project. Less frequent meetings and correspondence were maintained with participants after they took regular teaching positions.

Criteria outlined in Lincoln and Guba (1985) and by Williams (1986) were followed to enhance the credibility and utility of the inquiry (these included such precautions as prolonged engagement, persistent observation, triangulation, peer debriefing, member checking, thick description, and maintenance of an audit trail).

Overview of the Participants' Experiences

Several aspects of these student teachers' and novice teachers' experiences were unique as compared to the typical initiation experiences of teachers:

1. They were involved as student teachers for the whole school year, spending all day each school day in the school. Most student teachers begin after the school year is underway and leave before it is finished. This schedule gave the apprentices time to see the full range of experiences students have in school, just as good naturalistic inquirers hope to do in their studies. This full range of experience provided the student teachers a chance to develop richer relationships with the students (similar to informants) and to modify their initial perceptions over time. Of course, as novice teachers, the participants were able to spend additional full years in schools conducting inquiries as they taught.

2. Participants had opportunities to both team teach and solo teach while they learned about the students they were teaching and about the collective wisdom of people who write and think about education. They were part of a cohort of people learning to inquire and to teach. They spent time discussing the experience and the challenges they faced with one another and with experienced teachers, as well as with me (a representative from the research community and from the university). In the context of discussing the challenges of teaching, we spent time reading a variety of books and articles on learning and teaching, listening to guest speakers on novel ideas as well as historical views of education, raising issues for consideration during this year-long experience as well as in other situations, and thinking about how what we were reading fit with what we were experiencing. The readings, speakers, and associated theoretical and philosophical issues associated with learning and teaching were studied in the rich context of a complex learning and teaching experience in a school with real students. Participants earned the credits for education courses while having these teaching and inquiring experiences on site in the school rather than in classes at the university.

3. Invitations were issued to graduates from the apprenticeship program to continue some form of dialogue as they took teaching positions both within the school and elsewhere. Dialogue took place through correspondence and visits. Conversations were held with novice teachers about what they were doing, how they were applying what they learned during the apprenticeship, and what they were learning about their students, about themselves as inquirers and as teachers, and about learning and teaching. Unfortunately, the novice teachers did not have much time for reading the sources that were discovered after they left the student teaching experience.

4. All parties involved (the student or apprentice teachers, the novice teachers, the cooperating master teachers, and the university supervisor) kept fieldnotes or journal entries on all aspects of these experiences. Often these were brief notes taken after school while participants reflected on the experiences of the day. At other times, student teachers could be seen jotting notes during conversations with students and during planning sessions with each other and the cooperating teachers. As novice teachers, there was even less time for note taking. Though some participants were able to keep notes at school or right after the school day, arrangements were made with others to tape record their thoughts and send them to me for transcription. Others photocopied relevant sections of their personal journals and letters to family and friends to share with me.

In these notes, participants explored ideas from readings and discussions and analyzed how theories and philosophies fit with experiences in the classroom "laboratories." We shared our notes with one another on a regular basis, raising questions for further exploration, searching for patterns in our experience, relating these themes to the literature, and otherwise learning through writing and talking with interested inquiry colleagues.

What We Have Learned

Patterns of Experience

Looking across the experiences of all involved, several patterns emerged:

1. All the student teachers began their apprenticeship year confused about most everything they were going to do and they reflected their concerns clearly in their fieldnotes and in their conversations with me as their university supervisor, with the cooperating teachers, and with each other. They were concerned that the students would not respect them. They were concerned about the ways the cooperating teachers were organizing the class. They wondered about the disruptive behavior of some of the students. They wondered what role they were to play since they were not the regular teachers and they were not students. Their concerns are reminiscent of the anxieties ethnographers experience when they are seeking to establish working field relations. The novice teachers had many of the same feelings as they began their school year all on their own without the security of cooperating teachers, a university supervisor, or a cohort of colleagues they knew already who would support them in the immediate situation.

2. About two months into the school year, the student teachers were feeling fairly confident about their abilities to conduct naturalistic inquiry and they began taking on more of the teaching role too. Their fieldnotes reflected an increasing ability to describe what they were hearing and experiencing. They included more concrete and insightful descriptions of the physical and historical settings involved, the participants, the activities and events, the verbal and non-verbal communications of the participants, and their presence and involvement as participant-observers. Their reflections about the experience grew richer with time too. They more freely included their own feelings as participants in this experience and there was marked improvement in the quality of the inquiry as well as the teaching being done over the entire nine months. Their field relations grew richer with time and the quality of questions they were asking increased. Instead

of worrying so much about how to keep students on task or orderly, they asked instead what the relationships were between students' experiences outside of school and their interest in the school topics. They were willing to meet students where they were in terms of their interests and motivations rather than demand that the students "rise to the level of the set curriculum."

3. Although they had moments of insight that alleviated their initial feelings of confusion during the first few months, the greatest increments in understanding about what was going on came when the student teachers attempted to write summaries about what they were learning about the program and their experience in it. The synthesis writing process helped them see patterns that made sense but which they had not seen while deeply involved in the more descriptive kinds of fieldnote writing. For example, one student teacher had almost decided she was not going to teach in the innovative way she was observing when she had her own class. But in February, when she began writing a synthesis paper for a university assignment and was asked to defend it before external reviewers, she discovered that although she would make some modifications, she was very pleased with the approach being taken in this program and intended to use it as the basis for her own programs. She and the other student teachers agreed that they needed the whole nine months to really understand the innovative program they were involved with as well as the regular classes they taught in and the process of naturalistic inquiry which they used. The notion of prolonged engagement on site which is so critical to good qualitative inquiry was also essential to good student teaching.

4. The novice teachers found it difficult to continue taking fieldnotes as frequently as they did while student teaching; however, they were able to find ways of reflecting upon and recording their experiences even during the time-demanding first year. For example, one teacher tape recorded her fieldnotes while driving home from school or at other moments away from the school setting. Another used a computer at the school after hours to record her notes. Another sent copies of personal letters and diary entries which dealt with issues at school to me for inclusion in the study. None of the novice teacher's notes were as rich and insightful as their writing had been during the apprenticeship. This was a disappointment to me. But in talking to them about the experience, at least one of the novice teachers said that writing about her experience to any degree and then having a chance to talk to me about what she had written and even more about the experience helped her sort out many issues that she had been confused about. It gave her a chance to talk about issues at a deeper level than she was able to do with most of the teachers and administrators assigned to assist her during that first year in her school. Perhaps this depth was achieved because we referred to her writing as a basis for our conversations and her interactions with colleagues in the school were based on orally shared concerns about the day-to-day activities of teaching. Writing requires the writer and reader to consider the issues more deeply.

5. The cooperating teachers benefited from their involvement in preparing teachers with this inquiry focus too. They participated in many of the reading and discussion sessions and kept fieldnotes at least part of the time. They both noted several times that they clarified their own thinking and intentions through this process. They found that their level of thinking about schooling, learning, and teaching grew deeper and deeper through this process. They made many modifications to their program in response to this thinking. They also involved their principal and other colleagues in more serious dialogue as they considered what they were reading and what they were seeing the student teachers learn.

6. Finally, together we discovered several insights into education through a review of the fieldnotes and reports written by these student teachers and novice teachers that will be shared with teachers and researchers through articles we are preparing for joint publication. For example, one participant identified what she called the preconditions for learning that she discovered through this inquiry process-- conditions that should be met by teachers before students are willing to learn. Another participant explored the role of freedom and responsibility

for students and how a new teacher can build on students' views of themselves to overcome many of the challenges faced by novice teachers who rely too heavily on classroom management and other techniques commonly taught in education courses. A third novice teacher shared ideas he learned during his apprenticeship with his administrators and colleagues at his new school and helped expand their vision of educational reform. As a result, they have begun discussing ways of implementing such reforms.

Conclusions

I also changed as a result of conducting naturalistic inquiry with these colleagues and particularly through consideration of the readings I discussed with the other participants. In the conclusion to this presentation, I will summarize one particular lesson I learned and implications for the notion of teachers as researchers by using the work of Levinas, a post-modern philosopher.

Emmanuel Levinas is a French philosopher who has critiqued modernist thought as well as the post-modernist critics in a unique and arresting way. Andrius Valevicius (cited in Packard and Warner, 1992, page 4) claimed that "In contemporary continental philosophy there is no name today more popular than that of Emmanuel Levinas, and in France, especially since the death of Jean-Paul Sartre, no thinker held in higher esteem. Emmanuel Levinas has already been the inspiration of two generations of French intellectuals."

Levinas (1987, p. 55) argued that Heidegger did not go far enough in his critique of the metaphysics of modernism and that ethics (the responsibility of the same or oneself to the others of the world) and the social relationship actually precedes metaphysics and ontology in terms of importance in philosophy and in our modes of being in society:

> To conclude, the well-known theses of Heideggerian philosophy-- the preeminence of Being over beings, of ontology over metaphysics-- end up affirming a tradition in which the same dominates the other, in which freedom, even the freedom that is identical with reason precedes justice. Does not justice consist in putting the obligation with regard to the other before obligations to oneself, in putting the other before the same?
>
> Experience, the idea of infinity, occurs in the relationship with the other. The idea of infinity is the social relationship. This relationship consists in approaching an absolutely exterior being. The infinity of this being, which one can therefore not contain, guarantees and constitutes this exteriority. It is not equivalent to the distance between a subject and an object. An object, we know, is integrated into the identity of the same; the I makes of it its theme, and then its property, its booty, its prey or its victim. The exteriority of the infinite being is manifested in the absolute resistance which by its apparition, its epiphany, it opposes to all my powers.
>
> To be sure, the other is exposed to all my powers, succumbs to all my ruses, all my crimes. Or he resists me with all his force and all the unpredictable resources of his own freedom. I measure myself against him. But he can also -- and here is where he presents me his face -- oppose himself to me beyond all measure, with the total uncoveredness and nakedness of his defenseless eyes, the straightforwardness, the absolute frankness of his gaze. . . . Here is established a relationship not with a very great resistance, but with the absolutely other; with the resistance of what has no resistance, with ethical resistance.

Levinas does not apply his arguments directly to the issues of this paper. He is writing to philosophers about the basic tenets of philosophy. Yet, the implications of his discourse run deep into the very foundations of what we are about in the pursuit of knowledge and in the practices of education. His reference to the "same" fits well with my view of myself as a teacher educator, with the student teacher as apprentice, and with the novice as teacher. The "other" in

each case could be considered our students. And we have our projects we are trying to achieve with these others-- to teach them and prepare them and shape them in curricular ways that we value. But they present themselves to us as resistant to our projects, as people who are beyond our absolute understanding and therefore beyond our control. We can have a relationship with these others but we can not consume them into being part of us. As people, they resist being reduced to our products. Levinas would say that to view another as simply a student would be to do violence to him or her, to totalize the other. Instead we can recognize the exteriority of the infinite other (we can not actually consume the other into our projects and categories) and respond to the other in the ethical relationship we are already in.

Packard and Warner (1992) apply Levinas' thesis in a critique of film writing and analysis in a way that closely parallels the theme I have begun to discover in the teacher as learner experiences discussed in this presentation. This is the idea that learning to relate to students as infinite others in Levinasian terms through the use of naturalistic inquiry helps teachers resist a negative focus on "totalizing" teaching methods so they become responsive and thoughtful master teachers more quickly. The participants I have worked with have been diverted from the typical educational project of coming up with the ideal teaching method by the "faces" or perspectives of the students they have tried to understand by being naturalistic learners as well as teachers.

> The difference between the responsible and irresponsible image [teaching method] is whether you are loving or resisting others in seeing and describing the world. In the one case you are building your own world, resisting the obligations to others as you do so, turning yourself and your world into stereotypes. In the other case, you are open, responsive to others in building your world. You aren't building it simply for yourself. You are building it for others. As Levinas put it, this is possible "only as responsibility for the other, as substitution for him." It is the difference between shaping another for the sake of your world and shaping your world for the sake of another. Your world is open and responsive to others, not simply "in opening to the spectacle of or the recognition of the other, but in becoming a responsibility for him."
>
> If you want to hold things together, be thrilled by the harmonious beauty of your stereotypes, excited about your detached existence, you have to feel disgust for the mundane, disorganized world of your ordinary perception. You must keep up the need to resist ordinary perception [the emic view discovered through qualitative inquiry]. The more thrilling the imaginary [the etic or the methodologies of teaching] world, the more disgust you must feel for the ordinary one [focusing on relationships with students as people]. Charles Darwin wrote that the more elaborate and orderly his scheme of evolution became, the less he could enjoy the ordinary pleasures of life. This is the dismal fate that the irresponsible imagination [focus on teaching technique] holds for its disciples.

The continuing emphasis on a science of teacher preparation and of teaching itself is toward what Packard and Warner are calling irresponsible imagination. From this viewpoint, to become a teacher, one is invited to learn teaching techniques which can be applied to learners in learning situations without ever having to face these learners as individual and ulitimately uncontrollable persons. This whole process can actually close people off from other people. It closes teachers off from knowing the students as they are. It closes the student teachers off from knowing what teaching and learning can be. It prevents us all from enjoying these "ordinary pleasures of life."

The student teachers and novice teachers involved in this project began exploring what teaching and learning can be by learning to observe and listen to the others (student teachers, teachers, and students) they worked with and by being open and responsive to them. They did this by using naturalistic inquiry to immerse themselves in the lives of the students and others

they were there to serve. This helped them avoid the trap of using techniques from educational theory to assign these people to predetermined learn categories or images.

The experience of these teachers and student teachers suggests that by encouraging educators to be learners who try to see the world through the eyes of others (such as students, other teachers, and parents they may encounter) they may better avoid stereotyping and learn to enjoy the pleasures of learning and teaching rather than worry so much about creating their educational theories to their loss and to the loss of the students who face them with their defenseless eyes.

The combination of readings, visits, discussions, writing of fieldnotes, and other activities engaged in by the participants in the preservice and inservice experiences described in this presentation encouraged all of us to be inquiring about our experiences with students. The process of learning through naturalistic inquiry has opened us up to new possibilities and has encouraged us to try new approaches in response to student needs. This approach to teacher preparation and improvement has been in contrast to the common approach of assuming that each teacher should have certain teaching or pedagogical skills and training them in anticipation that they will use these skills some time in an educational setting.

Parker Palmer (1983, pages 29-32) critiques the more common approach as objectivism that "is institutionalized in our educational practices, in the ways we teach and learn" and proposes an alternative that resonates with Levinas. Palmer speaks of the knower and the known which parallels Levinas' "same" and "other."

> The teacher is a mediator between the knower and the known, between the learner and the subject to be learned... The way a teacher plays the mediator role conveys both an epistemology and an ethic to the student, both an approach to knowing and an approach to living.... As a teacher, I teach more than a body of knowledge or a set of skills. I teach a mode of relationship between the knower and the known, a way of being in the world.
>
> Of course there are plenty of pedagogical experiments around these days, many proposals for innovative and engaging ways to teach and learn, but most of them deal only with techniques. They leave the underlying epistemology unexamined and unchanged; they are not well grounded in an alternative theory about the nature of knowing... One does not develop a new pedagogy simply by choosing from a grab bag of teaching tricks. To find new ways of transmitting knowledge, we must first find a new knowledge. To find a better medium, we must find a better message.
>
> The message education should convey is ... called "truth." That word, once central to any discussion of knowing, teaching, and learning... is not much used these days....
>
> But when we examine the image hidden at the root of "truth" it turns out to be more immediate, grounded, and human than the words we now use to describe the knowledge we prize. The English word "truth" comes from a Germanic root that also gives rise to our word "troth," as in the ancient vow "I pledge thee my troth." With this word one person enters a covenant with another, a pledge to engage in a mutually accountable and transforming relationship, a relationship forged of trust and faith in the face of unknowable risks.
>
> To know something or someone in truth is to enter troth with the known, to rejoin with new knowing what our minds have put asunder. To know in truth is to become betrothed, to engage the known with one's whole self, an engagement one enters with attentiveness, care, and good will. To know in truth is to allow one's self to be known as well, to be vulnerable to the challenges and changes any true relationship brings. To know in truth is to enter into the life of that which we know and to allow it to enter into ours. Truthful knowing weds the knower and the known; even in separation, the two become part of each other's life and fate.

> ... truth involves entering a relationship with someone or something genuinely other than us, but with whom we are intimately bound. Truth contains the image we are seeking - the image of community in which we were first created, the image of relatedness between the knower and the known that certain philosophies of science now affirm.
>
> Educating toward truth does not mean turning away from facts and theories and objective realities. If we devote ourselves to truth, the facts will not necessarily change (though some may, since every fact is a function of relationship). What*will* change is our relation to the facts, or to the world that the facts make known. Truth requires the knower to become interdependent with the known. Both parties have their own integrity and otherness, and one party cannot be collapsed into the other. But truth demands acknowledgment of and response to the fact that the knower and the known are implicated in each other's lives.
>
> In truthful knowing we neither infuse the world with our subjectivity (as premodern knowing did) nor hold it at arm's length, manipulating it to suit our needs (as is the modernist style). In truthful knowing the knower becomes co-participant in a community of faithful relationships with other persons and creatures and things, with whatever our knowledge makes known. We find truth by pledging our troth, and knowing becomes a reunion of separated beings whose primary bond is not of logic but of love.

Palmer (pages 39-40) goes on to critique specific kinds of teaching that are typical of our schools and argues that such teaching continues to dominate our educational systems because:

> . . . it conveys a view of reality that simplifies our lives. By this view, we and our world become objects to be lined up, counted, organized, and owned, rather than a community of selves and spirits related to each other in a complex web of accountability called "truth." The conventional pedagogy pretends to give us mastery over the world, relieving us of the need for mutual vulnerability that the new epistemologies, and truth itself, imply.
>
> We want a kind of knowledge the eliminates mystery and puts us in charge of an object-world. Above all, we want to avoid a knowledge that calls for our own conversion. We want to know in ways that allow us to convert the world -- but we do not want to be known in ways that require us to change as well.
>
> To learn is to face transformation. To learn the truth is to enter into relationships requiring us to respond as well as initiate, to give as well as take. If we became vulnerable to the communal claims of truth, conversion would be required. . . But we find it safer to seek facts that keep us in power rather than truths that require us to submit. Objectivist education is a strategy for avoiding our own conversion. If we keep reality "out there," we can avoid, for a while, the truth that lays the claim of community on our individual and collective lives.

The alternative approach to teacher preparation that we have been exploring has encouraged teachers, student teachers, and myself to be more vulnerable to the needs of those we are trying to teach. Conducting naturalistic inquiry to understand others and to respond to them has helped create a community that questions the objectivist milieu in which we all grew up and which is predominant around us. This experience has been an invitation to be vulnerable ourselves as we want the people we are to teach to be vulnerable to us. This is not the controlling approach of "modeling" so people will follow us. Rather, it is a matter of becoming humble enough that we really are willing to change ourselves and our projects in the face of our students and their needs, interests, and concerns. This is the point Levinas makes in saying that the ethical relationship or responsibility to the other is primary and the ways of knowing and teaching that are the focus of so much of modern instructional theory are secondary.

Implications

This process of involving student teachers and novice teachers as naturalistic inquirers works. They can take fieldnotes, do simple qualitative analyses, write brief summary reports, and learn to think critically about educational issues while they learn to teach and begin teaching. It is also a very helpful way to prepare teachers, helps cooperating teachers do their job better, gives the university supervisor an immense wealth of information to judge the quality of the student teachers against, and helps novice teachers get through their initial experiences more professionally.

More importantly, involving teachers at all stages of their development in inquiry helps them understand their students better, helps them model the learning process for their students, makes them willing to change themselves so they are more flexible in the face of others and their needs, and involves them in the research community so we all benefit from their insights (if we will be humble and teachable ourselves).

This process of preparing and supporting teachers could be used by other investigators and we could study it longitudinally with cohorts of student teachers and novice teachers to see what they do with the skills developed during these reflective field experiences. If the findings of this study can be elaborated and confirmed in other settings, the implications for teacher preparation are profound. The focus in preservice teaching majors as well as the education classes might shift from content acquisition and pedagogical technique to the study of key questions and inquiry processes used by the various disciplines and to the development of naturalistic and other interpretive inquiry skills that would help the teachers understand their students and their school settings more deeply and usefully. Certainly, the call to ethical responsibility to the others voiced by Levinas and Palmer suggests that teacher preparation should involve many encounters between those who are preparing to teach and the people they want to teach. Teaching techniques within that context may be helpfully taught but they can not take precedence over relationships between teachers and learners.

The question for us to consider here at AERA is, are we as educational researchers willing to respond to the faces of these teacher researchers and welcome their insights in spite of their different views, perspectives and credentials. Are we willing to be vulnerable too?

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